Pochiyama
At the Pharmacy

by yoshitoshi ABe

薬局のポチ山さん

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● FOREWORD

THIS COMIC IS A STORY ABOUT A CONVERSATION THAT TAKES PLACE BETWEEN A BOY WHO IS SHOPPING AT A STRANGE PHARMACY, AND AN EMPLOYEE AT THE PHARMACY. I HAD A FEW PLOT SETTINGS MADE UP, BUT DRAWING WHAT WOULD NORMALLY BE CONSIDERED THE "FIRST EPISODE" WOULD TAKE TOO LONG, AND ISN'T REALLY WHAT I SET OUT TO ACCOMPLISH WITH THIS PROJECT. SO, WHAT WE SEE HERE IS AN EPISODE OUT OF THEIR DAILY LIVES. YOU MAY BE A LITTLE CONFUSED BY THE LACK OF EXPLANATION WITHIN THE STORY REGARDING THE SETTINGS AND CHARACTER BACKGROUNDS, BUT THE ONLY CHARACTERS WHO SHOW UP ARE A DRUG-STORE EMPLOYEE WITH A STRANGE NAME (POCHIYAMA) AND A TEENAGED BOY NAMED TAKI, SO IF YOU COULD JUST SORT OF RELAX AND READ THROUGH IT LIKE USUAL, THAT WOULD BE GREAT.

POCHIYAMA IS A SELF-DESCRIBED SOCIOPATHIC SHUT-IN, SO SHE RARELY TALKS. TAKI IS AN ORDINARY HIGHSCHOOLER. HE OCCASIONALLY STOPS BY TO DO SOME SHOPPING. THE NAME "POCHIYAMA PHARMACY" IMPLIES THAT THE STORE IS INDEED A PHARMACY, BUT IN REALITY IT'S A PLACE WHERE POCHIYAMA SELLS STRANGE ODDS AND ENDS THAT ARE TO HER LIKING. THAT'S THE SORT OF STORY HERE.

AS FOR WHY I'M RAMBLING ON AND ON LIKE THIS - IT'S BECAUSE THIS BEING THE FIRST TIME IN A LONG WHILE THAT I'VE WRITTEN ANY COMICS, I TOTALLY FORGOT THAT COMICS NEED COVER PAGES, AND STARTED DRAWING FROM THE LEFT-HANDED PAGE. I'M SORRY. PLEASE ENJOY.

POCHIYAMA PHARMACY
Chew Chew
Creak
'MORNING!

Welcome!
tap
SIZZLE
Welcome!
Note this.
THIS IS SOME REALLY TERRIBLE SERVICE !!

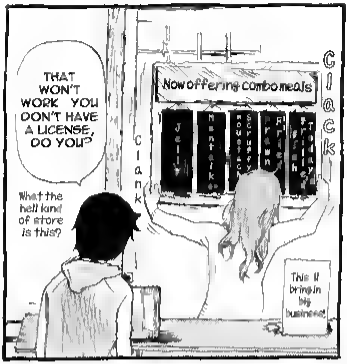
THAT WON'T DO
What?
Welc
This
It's your fault for coming to shop at lunch time.
DON'T JUST SIT THERE, EATING YOUR LUNCH!
I MEAN, THE STORE IS OPEN, ISN'T IT?
...
BUT REALLY...
I'm a hikikomori clerk, so why.
PLEASE TALK NORMALLY, WOULD YOU?

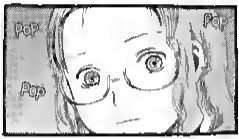
TRANSLATOR'S NOTE:
A HIKIKOMORI IS A SOCIAL
[illegible] WITH
DRAWN FROM SOCIETY.

UM... BECAUSE THIS IS A ONE-PERSON PHARMACY?
HMM? S THAT?
WHY WON'T YOU KEEP YOUR WORK AND PRIVATE LIVES SEPARATED?
WELL, IN THAT CASE, SHOULDN'T YOU JUST HIRE A PART-TIME WORKER AND WORK IN SHIFTS?
AH... SORRY, SORRY
ズバー
金が

SIGN THERE'S NO MONEY

* TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: MENTAIKO IS FISH ROE PICKLED WITH SALT OR CHILI


THAT WON'T WORK. YOU DON'T HAVE A LICENSE, DO YOU?
What the hell kind of store is this?
Clank
Now offering combo meals
Clack
This'll bring in big business!

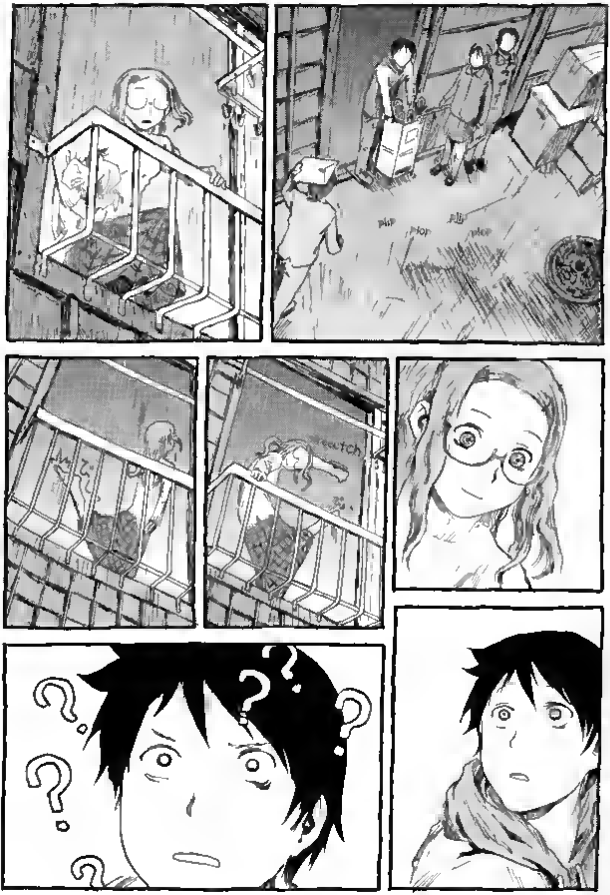


EVEN IF THAT WERE A YAKUZA DOCTOR'S LICENSE, THAT WOULDN'T CHANGE ANYTHING. PLEASE GIVE UP ON THIS BIG BUSINESS DREAM OF YOURS
NO.
tap
tap
tap
tap

TRANSLATOR'S NOTE: THE ABOVE TWO PANELS CONTAIN A SILLY PUN OFF OF "YAKUZAISHI" (PHARMACIST) AND "YAKUZA ISHI" (YAKUZA DOCTOR)

NOW, NOW. I MEAN, WHY WOULD YOU WANT TO CREATE MORE WORK WHEN YOU'RE ALREADY UNDER-STAFFED?
down.
Feeling
good
plop
plop
Side
HEY,
POCHIYAMA, YOU LEFT YOUR LAUNDRY OUT
AH, IT'S STARTING TO RAIN

I'LL WATCH THE STORE, SO PLEASE GO ON AHEAD
UMM
To where your panties are.
わた
わた
register
card
panties
Ah!
tappa
tappa
tappa
IT MAY NOT BE BIG, BUT STILL, IT IS BUSINESS
Vinyl umbrellas 500 yen
splatter


plip
plop
plip
plop
wwwtch
wwwtch

Many thanks.
AH
WHAT WAS THAT ODD DANCE YOU WERE JUST DOING?
Good job!
AH—

NO, NO, NO!!
I'M NOT PRAISING YOU!!
POCHIYAMA-SAN...
YOU REALLY ARE A WEIRDO...
tap
tap
I ONLY CAME TO BUY LAUNDRY DETERGENT, BUT I ENDED UP SPENDING ALL DAY HERE
SIGH
YES?
Wanna have dinner?

YOU SURE ABOUT THIS?
For those who do not not work shall not not eat.
UH, SORRY, I DON'T GET THAT ONE
FRESH...? OH, YOU MEAN YOU GET IT SHIPPED STRAIGHT FROM THE PRODUCER?
HEY, MENTAIKO
Fresh Made
WELL, LET'S EA-
WOW!
REALLY?
WHAT?
It's home-made.

FLAP
FLAP
FLAP
WAIT JUST A SECOND!!
It's home-made, so it's nice and fresh!!
THUD
OOOOOOH!?
SLIDE
Oh, it got away.
WHAT THE HELL!? WHAT THE HELL IS THIS!?
IT'S GOT A FACE!!

*TRANSLATOR'S NOTE
OISHINBO (THE GOURMET) IS A CULINARY DRAMA MANGA, WHICH ABE HAS PREVIOUSLY REFERENCED IN A TARAME PARADISE SHORT ON MOE-TAN

By accident, when I was messing around with genomes.
HEY !!
HOW DID YOU MAKE THOSE ANY-HOW?
THAT'S WHAT I'D LIKE TO KNOW
If that's true, then what exactly is this...?
IF THESE THINGS ESCAPE INTO TOWN AND MUTATE INTO GIANTS?
SO WHAT ARE YOU GONNA DO...
BAM!
Hell-done

All-you-can-eat!
THAT POCHI-YAMA, ALWAYS CAUSING TROUBLE
plod
plod
I NEVER DID GET TO EAT THAT DINNER
HM?
GEEZ

The End

AFTERWORD

IT'S NOW 5 MINUTES BEFORE MY SUBISSION DEADLINE. I HOPE YOU ENJOYED YOURSELF. I'M WINGING THIS AS I GO ALONG, SO I HAVEN'T SETTLED ON ANY OF THE FINER PLOT POINTS JUST YET, WHICH IS SOMETHING I CONSTANTLY REGRET SINCE IT CAUSED ME MANY HEADACHES AS I WAS PROGRESSING THROUGH THE SCENES.

I WAS INITIALLY PLANNING ON MAKING THIS A VERY CONFINED SITUATION. THE ONLY CHARACTERS WOULD BE A PHARMACY EMPLOYEE NAMED POCHIYAMA AND A TEENAGER NAMED TAKI, THE ONLY LOCATION YOU WOULD SEE WOULD BE THE INSIDE OF THE STORE, THERE WOULD ONLY BE POINTLESS CHATTER, AND, TO TOP IT OFF, POCHIYAMA WOULDN'T SAY A WORD. HOWEVER, AS I GOT AROUND TO DRAWING THESE THINGS, I SOON FOUND MYSELF IN A SITUATION WHERE ESTABLISHING WHAT I SET OUT TO DO WITH ONLY THESE ELEMENTS WAS DIFFICULT, IF NOT IMPOSSIBLE, ON THE CONTRARY, THE MENTAL IMAGE I HAD OF THIS WORLD KEPT GROWING BIGGER AND BIGGER IN MY MIND AS I FOUND MYSELF THINKING UP A SERIES OF ADDITIONAL PLOT AND CHARACTERS SETTINGS, WHICH HAS ME CONTEMPLATING WHAT TO DO FROM HERE ON OUT.

IN ANY CASE, THIS WAS THE FIRST TIME I'D DRAWN A PROPER COMIC IN A WHILE, AND IT WAS A STRUGGLE TRYING TO MAKE MY HANDS KEEP UP. AT THE SAME TIME, I ENJOYED MAKING MANY DISCOVERIES WHILE WORKING ON THIS. I'D LIKE TO MAKE SOME TIME TO STOCKPILE A FEW OF THESE PIECES SO I CAN PUBLISH THEM.

2005.12.21 YOSHITOSHI ABE

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